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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PASS TO AMCONSUL QUEBEC

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [EAID](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: Preval Seeks International Donor Support for Elections

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CLASSIFIED BY: MERTEN, KENNETH, AMBASSADOR; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: President Preval convoked the diplomatic corps, the board of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) and several members of his Cabinet to a 16 December meeting at the Palace to discuss arrangements for the upcoming parliamentary elections. He asked potential donors to confirm for the UNDP their electoral contributions by 17 December so the UNDP would not miss its deadline for ordering electoral materials, noting that any delay in the tightly-scheduled elections would threaten the GOH's ability to get the new legislature to approve constitutional reforms before the May 10 deadline. Neither the GOH nor the UNDP had previously told the donors of the need for confirmation of donations by December 17. The US and other donors agreed to seek confirmation from capitals, but told Preval that he should consider other immediate-term options (i.e. GOH support). Preval thanked the OAS for its commitment to send election observers, and Chief of Police Andresol reviewed security arrangements for the elections. The UNDP told us subsequently that they will be asking the GOH to pay for the first tranche of electoral expenses. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) At a 16 December meeting with the diplomatic corps and the members of the CEP, President Preval discussed problems with the voter registration list, outlined security arrangements for the elections, and made an appeal for donors to confirm their election support plans to the UNDP by 17 December in order for the UNDP to order voting kits and ballots. On the voter registration list, Preval noted that it had been put together by the OAS in 2005, but that it had not been updated since then. His advisers believe that "up to 7-8%" of the voters on the list are deceased. The lack of an updated voter registration list lends itself to election-day fraud and will exaggerate the abstention rate. The OAS representative said that the lack of a national system to record births and deaths made it impossible to update the voter list without doing an expensive and time consuming census. He said the OAS could not possibly carry this out in time for either the legislative or presidential election. He said the OAS could do sampling in a small number of communities to get an estimate of what percentage of voters are either dead or no longer in Haiti, but said that it is too late to address problems with the voter registration list. Preval once again thanked the OAS for offering to send an observation mission, and the OAS representative confirmed that the OAS intends to send 80-100 observers to the parliamentary elections and 200 to the presidential election.

¶3. (SBU) Preval then turned to what appeared to be the reason for convoking such a large group of diplomats and GOH officials. He said that the UNDP must order ballots and voting kits by 17 December in order for them to get here in time for the legislative elections. Any delay in ordering the material risks delaying the elections, which would derail any possibility of the new legislature voting on constitutional reforms by the May 10 deadline. The UNDP representative said that the election fund is short \$3.5 million to cover the cost of the materials. Preval turned to the donor country Ambassadors and asked for a status report on their potential contributions. The United States, Brazil

and Canada all said that our capitals are considering the possibility of providing funding to the upcoming elections, but noted that we had not previously been made aware of the looming deadline and are not sanguine that our respective budget processes would be able to respond in 24 hours to this request. All promised to query capitals, but urged the GOH and the UNDP to consider other sources of funding. Preval lamented that his Finance Minister was visiting Caracas and was not represented at the meeting, but queried his other Ministers if GOH financing was a possibility. The Director General of the CEP said he believed GOH financing could be possible. Preval asked Ambassadors to inquire with their capitals while he searched through the coffers of the GOH.

¶4. (C) In subsequent discussions with the Canadians we were told that Canada has not made a decision yet on election funding, and that there was no way they would be able to respond to this appeal in 24 hours. The UNDP also told us that they are not prepared at this time to advance funds based on possible donor contributions as none of the donors is close to signing a formal agreement contributing to the UNDP basket fund, and three of the donors (Canada, the EU and Brazil) have not made a firm commitment to support the elections, though it is widely expected that they will. The UNDP will go back to Preval and tell him that the GOH will have to use its own election budget to pay for these early expenses.

¶5. (C) Preval turned to Police Chief Mario Andresol and asked him to outline his plans for providing security for the elections. Andresol noted that the police are working closely with MINUSTAH to ensure appropriate security at every polling station. He said that they have identified "red zones" where both the police and MINUSTAH

will increase their security presence, highlighting problems in the central plateau and the southern claw during the last elections. Andresol is confident that security incidents can be kept to a minimum.

¶6. (C) Preval asked the CEP if the CEP staff is prepared to carry out the elections and to train the poll workers. They responded that planning and training is progressing well. Regarding funding for political parties, Preval said that the GOH has set aside the subsidy they will give contenders in the upcoming elections and they will be disbursing it soon. (NB: This is in contrast to the last election where GOH subsidies were distributed on the day before the elections, effectively depriving candidates of GOH resources during the campaign.)

MERTEN